

Message Text

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44

ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 OMB-01 OPR-02 AID-20 PC-04 CIAE-00

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DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 L-03 NSC-10 PA-04 PRS-01 SPC-03

SS-20 USIA-15 SAM-01 EUR-25 NIC-01 DRC-01 CU-04 HEW-08

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R 132129Z FEB 74

FM AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6313

INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, PINT, HO

SUBJ: LABOR UNREST

BEGIN SUMMARY: A STRIKE OF JUDICIAL EMPLOYEES AND
THREATENED STRIKES BY TEACHERS, SOCIAL WORKERS AND THE
WORKERS OF THE TEXACO REFINERY AND STANDARD FRUIT CO HAVE
GOH AUTHORITIES WORRIED. GOH FEARS INFLATIONARY ROUND OF
WAGE DEMANDS WILL AFFECT IMPLEMENTATION OF DEVELOPMENT
PLAN AND INCREASE THE POSSIBILITY OF CIVIL DISORDER IF
WAGE DEMANDS ARE NOT MET. END SUMMARY.

1. THE EMPLOYEES OF THE JUDICIAL BRANCH OF GOVERNMENT
HAVE BEEN DEMANDING A 100 PERCENT SALARY INCREASE.
THEIR WILDCAT STRIKE HAS CAUSED AN ALMOST TOTAL
PARALYZATION OF THE CIVIL, LABOR AND CRIMINAL COURT
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SYSTEM OF THE COUNTRY. ON FEBRUARY 12 A MEETING OF

SEVERAL HUNDRED PEOPLE TOOK PLACE IN TEGUCIGALPA THAT SUPPORTED THE DEMANDS OF THE EMPLOYEES. A NUMBER OF PROMINENT LEFTIST ORGANIZATIONS TOOK PART IN THE SOLIDARITY DEMONSTRATION. A SUPREME COURT JUDGE TOLD AN EMBOFF THAT THE EMPLOYEES' ORGANIZATION HAD BEEN OFFERED A 25-30 PERCENT PAY INCREASE WHICH THEY HAD REFUSED. HE STATED THAT THE GOVERNMENT IS UNWILLING TO APPROPRIATE ANY MORE MONEY TO INCREASE THE OFFER BECAUSE OF THE NEEDS OF THE NEW NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN. HE OBSERVED THAT A CONTINUING PARALYSIS OF THE JUDICIAL BRANCH IS CREATING HAVOC AND THAT THE GOVERNMENT WILL HAVE TO TAKE SOME ACTION IF THE EMPLOYEES CONTINUE TO REJECT THE WAGE OFFER.

2. HONDURAS' FOUR TEACHERS "COLEGIOS" (PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS) HAVE UNITED TO SEEK LARGE SALARY INCREASES, WITH DEMANDS VARYING BETWEEN RAISES OF 50 TO 100 PER CENT OF CURRENT RATES. MINED NAPOLEON ALCERRO HAS TOLD EMBOFFS THAT THERE WILL BE NO MONEY FORTHCOMING AND THAT GOH IS PREPARING FOR CIVIL DISORDER. THE TEACHERS' DEMANDS HAVE BEEN STRONGLY PHRASED AND THEY THREATEN TO STRIKE IF SALARIES ARE NOT RAISED.

3. THE ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS THREATEN TO STRIKE IF THE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF CIVIL SERVICE DOES NOT RECLASSIFY POSITIONS AND RAISE WAGES OF SOCIAL WORKERS. SOCIAL WORKERS DEMAND SALARIES OF 500 LEMPIRAS (1 LEMPIRA EQUALS \$.50 US) MONTHLY. CURRENTLY GOH IS WORKING ON RECLASSIFICATION OF POSITIONS AND A SALARY STUDY.

4. THE UNION OF WORKERS OF TEXACO'S PUERTO CORTES REFINERY IS THREATENING STRIKE, CLAIMING COMPANY IS NOT FULFILLING ITS CONTRACT OBLIGATIONS. DISPUTE HAS NOT YET ENTERED MEDIATION, WHICH IS THE FIRST OF FOUR STEPS LEADING TO POSSIBLE LEGAL STRIKE.

5. THE DISPUTE BETWEEN STANDARD FRUIT COMPANY AND ITS UNION, SUTRAFSC9, HAS ENTERED MEDIATION. LABMIN FONSECA IS OPTIMISTIC THAT DISPUTE WILL BE RESOLVED AT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THIS STEP AND WILL NOT RESULT IN STRIKE.

6. COMMENT: THE LONG PERIOD OF A VIRTUAL ABSENCE OF STRIKES WHICH WAS SOURCE OF PRIDE FOR GOH IS APPARENTLY OVER. ONE YEAR AFTER LOPEZ COUP SEES MANY GROUPS CONTEMPLATING STRIKE ACTION AS MEANS OF GAINING DEFERRED INCREASES IN INCOME TO OFFSET SIGNIFICANT INCREASE IN COST OF LIVING. GOH PARTICULARLY CONCERNED

ABOUT LARGE SALARY DEMANDS OF PUBLIC EMPLOYEES WHICH,
IF GRANTED, WOULD CREATE PRECEDENT AND POSSIBLY INCREASE
INFLATION AND PREJUDICE NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLA,
APPARENTLY STRONG DETERMINATION OF TEACHERS GROUPS
CREATES DILEMMA FOR GOH OF EITHER REFUSING INCREASES OR
ALLOWING SMALL INCREASES WHILE CONTROLLING RESULTING
DISCONTENT WITHOUT RESORT TO STRONG REPRESSIVE
MEASURES.
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